



DIPLOMACY WORLD



DIPGIRL
#41.5

DIPGIRL #41.5 is a special publication of DIPLOMACY WORLD, a quarterly publication devoted to the game and hobby DIPLOMACY (DIPLOMACY is the game designed by Allan B. Calhamer and marketed by The Avalon Hill Game Co.). Subs to DW are US\$12 per year (USA), US\$14 (Canada), and US\$16 (Overseas) available from: Larry Peery, Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102, USA (619-295-6248). The General Editor of DW is Kathy Byrne, 29-10 169th St., Flushing, NY 11358. DW is published four times yearly with occasional special issues such as this one; which is being sent free to all DW subbers as a sort of Valentine's Day card. Thanx to all those who contributed to this issue and special thanx to Libby Hall, J.R. Baker, and Mike Maston for the illustrations.

Kathy wishes to dedicate this issue to dedicate this issue to Rex Martin, for reasons that will only be clear to readers of Avalon Hill's The GENERAL.



3

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY

by Kathy Byrne

Eight years ago, females were a rarity in the male world of wargaming. I can remember signing up for my first game of Diplomacy and feeling like a freak in a side show. Where were all the other women? Why did the males find it so amusing that a woman could be intrigued by Diplomacy?

Well, it is now 1986, and the hobby has changed. Female players have infiltrated the Diplomacy hobby, and they have certainly taught their male counterparts a few tricks. In reality, females have changed the very definition of the word Diplomacy.

In this special issue of DIPLOMACY WORLD, we hope to show you the impact that my sex has had on the hobby. We will give you a glimpse of what really goes on in the female mind during negotiations, and we will attempt to explain to all players the real meaning of the word - "MANipulation."

Females have had a major impact on the hobby, and through Diplomacy they have proven females are not the weaker sex. They have proven all's fair in love, war and Diplomacy. So, sit back and relax, and enjoy this very special issue of DW which is intended to highlight the female style of play - after all some day you may open a Diplomacy letter and see "hi, Cutie" as the heading. What is contained herein, may save you a cent or two.

TWO TRADITIONS

by Larry Peery

Two of the hobby's oldest traditions are women and the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Some how the two just seem to go together.

Women have been a small but vital part of the hobby since its very beginning. Although small in numbers they have had a major impact on the hobby over the years. In the beginning it was Margaret ("Peggy") Gemignani, Gail Schow and the infamous Miss Edi Birsan. Today the number of women in the hobby is still relatively small but their relative importance is great. This issue was created for, by and about women in the hobby, although some of the contributors to this issue are men. And that brings up the main point, men and women, women and men are the hobby.

The St. Valentine's Day Massacre is another old hobby tradition, going back to its earliest FTF days, way before DIPCON. Today STVDM are an annual tradition and are held across the hobby, celebrating Diplomacy at its best and worst.

We are pleased that this first special issue of DIPLOMACY WORLD should recognize the contributions of women to the hobby and the celebration of what many consider to be Diplomacy's annual holiday.

Enjoy.

LIFE AS A DIP CHILD

By Amanda Mazzer

What luck, being born the child of Mike Mazzer, a Postal Dip star! And not just any Diplomacy player, but a Nixon Award winner! Life in our home is fun. Daddy quit his job a long time ago so he could devote more time devising ways to lie to his opponents. Daddy always said it was though to become the number one Dip player, and even tougher to hold that title. Mom was forced to enter the job market so we could eat, while Dad worked to glorify our family name.

It's fun to have a househusband as your Dad. How many moms allow their kids a choice of beer or soda with their cereal? And to eat it in the family room in front of the television made it all the better. Our home is comfortable. It has that "lived-in look." Upon entering on any given day, you would find my brother Andy stuffing his face with chocolate. Daddy would be sitting in his overstuffed green chair. His belly, which long ago surpassed the description of "beer belly," hangs over his pink and blue boxer shorts. Daddy says it is important to be comfortable when thinking up new lies. Our house is decorated with Diplomacy boards, each set up at Daddy's finest moments; or should I say, Dad's finest stabs.

It's great to have Daddy home all day. He is grooming me to take his place as the Kingpin of Dipdom. To help me a long, I am required to tell 8 lies each day. That's easy, since I play Dad's secretary. I get to answer the phone. I practice lying to the dolts that call here. Hoss Pearson, Pudge Olsen, Woody, and Fast Fingers Mainardi are certainly pushovers.

But the N.Y. baglady is the best. She's a sucker for a 5-year-old's voice. Actually, Dad says she's just a sucker! Dad stabbed baglady Byrne so often that he has a special room with photos of all the times he burned Byrne.

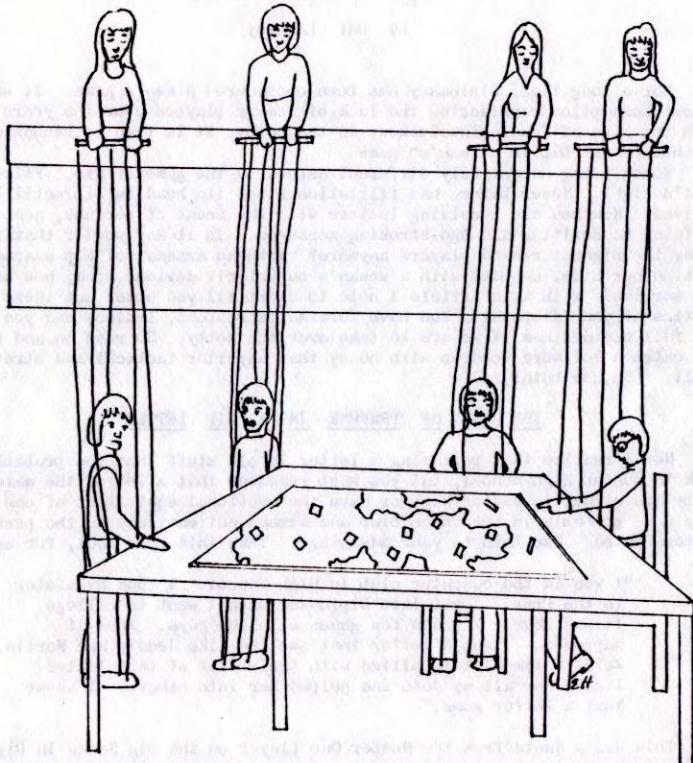
I remember my first face-to-face Con. It was a year ago, before I became an expert liar. Dad wanted to show me some of the hobby losers. Unfortunately, it was a West Coast con, and I would not be meeting any East Coasters, where Dad says all the true flunkies live. Dad says, "Put me in a Dip game as Austria with 6 East Coasters, and I'll show you an Austrian win by 1906!" I went to DafCon an innocent child. I returned a liar-holic.

I spent the first few hours spying on these pathetic souls. I quickly became bored. These people had vocabularies similar to my 3-year-old brother Andy. Have you ever tried to lie with 3-letter words?

Fortunately, other children were in attendance. Although they showed no interest in Dip, it was refreshing to get away from the crying and carrying on of Daddy's opponents.

All the children knew who I was, "daughter of the great one." I felt obligated to this group. Otherwise, they would disturb the Dip games before my dad finished off his opponents. In the true Mazzer spirit, I sacrificed myself for my father's glory. First, my hair was cut, and that was followed by the finger-painting of my hair. Yes, Dad hates punk rockers, but it was all for him.

Dad was proud of me that weekend. On the plane, returning home, he played his cassette he taped during the weekend of the crying, begging and pleading which resulted from his stabs. As we disembarked from the aircraft, Dad looked down at me and smiled. He was proud of me. I had that Mazzer killer instinct.



WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY:THE FLIRTATION FACTOR

by Daf Langley

For a long time, Diplomacy has been considered a man's game. It was an honest assumption considering the lack of female players over the years. However, with the rise of female involvement in the hobby, it is time to reconsider whether or not Dip is a "man's" game.

Women bring an entirely different aspect to the game of Dip. Flirtation. That's right. Never before has flirtation risen its head in Dip until the women arrived. Now men are receiving letters with the scent of perfume, neat rounded feminine handwriting and ego-stroking messages. Is it any wonder that women are among the highest ranked players anymore? With an arsenal of Dip weapons like that on her side, coupled with a woman's superiorly devious mind, how can the men survive? With this article I hope to alert all you women out there to the tactics at your disposal. You have formidable weapons, ladies, and you must get the full use of them if we are to take over the hobby. So read on and remember, you catch a lot more toadies with honey than superior tactical and strategic skill. (So use both!)

THE USE OF PERFUME IN A DIP LETTER

Now I realize that perfuming a letter is old stuff that you probably did back in Junior High School, but you must remember that a lot of the males in the hobby are either in Junior High or have the emotional equivalent of one that is. They were probably in the chess club and missed out entirely on the perfumed letters phase. Use this to your advantage. Take this poor soul, for example:

"I was in the computer club in High School. I took my sister to the Prom. I got into Diplomacy when I went to college. It was okay. I won a few games with the guys. Then it happened. I got a letter that smelled like Jennie Sue Martin. Well, I immediately allied with the writer of that letter. I gave her all my dots and helped her into others. I never lost a better game."

This was a quote from the Number One player on the Big Names in Dip list for 1978. Today he is a well-paid computer programmer who waits hand and foot on Shirley B., the writer of the above mentioned letter.

There you have it ladies, proof that the old perfume trick works. So get in there and douse those pages of colored paper and good gaming will follow.

On the off-chance that the man you are writing to is married, don't panic. Put even more perfume on the letter and call the man once a week until his wife forces him to quit Diplomacy. Timing is very important here, ladies, because you want to stab him the season his wife makes him quit. It is a sure bet his replacement will be single and coupled with the lack of dots at his disposal, he will be wide open to your charms.

FEMININE SCRIPT - A MAN'S DIP CRYPT?

"I was a twenty-six game man when I started. I was used to getting letters from guys. I never could read most of them, but then, they couldn't read mine either. We got along okay. One day I got a new game start and there was a broad playing Austria. I thought the GM had gone crazy, but it was true. A couple of days later, I got my first letter from her. It smelled wonderful. I opened up those colored pages and fell on the floor. The handwriting was beautiful. It was rounded and firm and soft and sensual, all at once! I had to take a cold shower before I could finish the letter!! Needless to say, I allied with this woman and even though she stabbed me for sixteen centers, I would kill for that woman. I reread all her old letters. They keep me from spending all my money on Playboy subs."

This was a statement given by a 10-game winner, who has since become a monk. It illustrates the power of feminine handwriting. Men are used to getting letters from other men. Greasy, folded pieces of paper with assorted pencil marks on it that are supposed to be letters. If it were not for the common abbreviations of the Dip countries, they wouldn't know what they were talking to each other about. Enter women players. Women always write with a neater hand than men. They take time with their letters and make sure that they are readable and good to look at. It is a proven fact that feminine handwriting (hence known as femwrite) is a visual stimulant to most men. A rounded "S," a pointed, bold "T," a provocative "O" all serve to drive a man wild with sexual energy. Exploit that fact, ladies! Write your letters with lots of "O"'s in them. Round out those "S"'s and make those "T"'s bold enough to take the man in hand and say, "Hi, I'm going to be your new ally! Fly me! (then give me all your dots!)"

IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS TOO

Now ladies, we've come to the most important lesson a female dip player can know. The most important weapon at her command - the flirt. Yes, all the other aspects were just foreplay. The meat of the letter is what's going to get you the gold, er dots. You want a letter that comes on soft and innocent. For example:

"Hi! I'm new to this game and I'm not sure of the rules. Could you give me a few pointers on how to order my units? I'm sure someone with your experience and obvious mastery of the game will take some time out and help a novice. By the way, I teach aerobics in my spare time and I have to special order my bras. I don't think nymphomania is so bad, but then I've had to live with it all my life. I'm really looking forward to meeting you face to face someday. Men always tell me I'm a terrific hug!"

See the innocence expressed in the above? The call to the male for help and succor? Of course, a little biographical material is essential for all correspondence. Let the man get to know you as a person, then he'll die before he stabs you.

If the man is scum and actually takes his knife to your bosom, you have an alternative tone to take with him.

"How could you? You brute! You've savaged my centers, and raped my homeland! I can't believe you would turn on the only person you confided in about your impotency. I've been a shoulder for you to cry on about your affair with your secretary and I'm the one who gave you the advice about the false books and the IRS. I'm going to swallow my pride and give you one more chance to leave my dots. Did I ever tell you I copy all my letters and keep them in a fire proof safe? Well, I guess we'll all wait until the next season to see whether or not your address changes."

Notice how the woman continues to put personality into the letters. How she continues to let the man know he's dealing with a person. It is guaranteed to make the scum float out of your dots and give you a few of his own for the trouble and anguish he caused you.

Well, there you have it ladies. A comprehensive guide to all the gifts God gave you and how to use them to your advantage. Good luck and good hunting!



GUNBOAT VARIATIONS

by Kathy Byrne

Gunboat Diplomacy can be especially fun when played by mail. The biggest factor in any Gunboat game is the GM, and if he allows press. Press can lead to identites being revealed just through the players style of writing or press can lead to negotiations. What I am going to attempt to do in this article is point out the different twists and turns a gunboat game can take, due to the different kinds of gamesmasters and players.

"Absent Minded Gunboat" is run by Tom Mainardi. Tom has a unique habit of forgetting to list the supply center chart as he calls for winter builds and removals. This is a very dangerous technique especially if I am in the game. One season I sent in three builds and Woody sent in three builds. Needless to say, Tom caught onto our little game. However, he really blew it in the season's headlines which read, "Kathy and Woody Better Stop Cheating!". So goes another gunboat (keep the players secret) game.

"Slimebucket Gunboat" is run by the ever popular Don Williams, lovingly referred to as "the Bumbling Idiot" by his players. Don allows everything in the press except your identity. He is also kind enough to provide his players with maps. Maps which often leave off entire countries. Don's omissions lead to some lively abuse from his players in the press, and contests are run to see who can best abuse the GM. Don's good nature and naive thinking can lead to a real good time. (Don was convinced that the players would never know each other as they lived all over the country. Needless to say he really got abused when at the game's conclusion it was learned that my Germany was allied with Honey Olsen's England!).

"Sweat Shop Gunboat" is a horror to any GM. This means that somehow Woody has slipped among the ranks as a player. From his Sweat Shop in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, Woody calls everyone in the hobby to find out if they are in this gunboat game with him. He attends conventions, and hangs up signs. Signs which list the gunboat game that he is in, and requests other players to contact him. Woody usually knows who all the players are before the game starts. That probably explains his title as the "GM's nightmare!"

"Gunboat Submarine Style" means that you have run across Dave Grabar. As his country dwindles from four to two units, you will see orders for submarines and commandos. Most GMs will ignore him, but if John Caruso is the GM, Dave is able to slip this by him quite easily. Never let it be said that when John runs a game, he doesn't help his players. Dave's order of Sub WMed S F Brest-MAO is a sure thing under John.

However the most unique style of Gunboat Diplomacy has to be run by Lee Kendter, Sr. It is quite appropriately named "The Iron Fist." Lee as a GM, really knows how to lay down the law. There is no press, and players don't dare to contact each other. Lee runs a tight ship, and probably the only real "Gunboat" games.

As you have seen by the above, players and GMs definitely have an affect on the way Gunboat is played. But no matter which GM or player you run across, I can guarantee that Gunboat is an interesting, even unexpected, game!

THE FIVE ITALIES (OR KATHY BYRNE) VARIANT

Original version by Mike Lee, 1985.

First printed in NOT NEW YORK #4/5, April 1985

Map redrawn and Rules updated for the North American Variant Bank by Fred Davis, 1986.

Introduction

Named for Kathy Byrne, this variant is designed to accomodate face-to-face games for a group of five people who, like Kathy Byrne, are only happy when the can play Italy. I find Italy by far the most interesting country to play, and so do many others. So, when too many of us Italy First players appear at a con, we can all play happily by playing this game.

Rules

1. There are five countries. All of them are named "Italy!" To avoid confusion, these are labelled "Italy A, Italy B, etc." Their positions are absolutely equal. The GM will assign the countries by lot. To distinguish each country, all of the spaces within a country are labelled "A, B, C, etc." The sea spaces and Tunises are similarly labelled. Therefore it was felt unnecessary to write "Italy A," "Italy B," etc. on the map, although that is what the countries will be called.

2. Each Italy will start with an A Venice and F Naples. Players will have the choice of either an A or F in Rome. This choice need not be disclosed until the Spring 1901 moves are announced.

3. There are 15 Home and 6 neutral Supply Centers. A player must own eleven centers on a Fall turn to win.

4. Switzerland is passable and a neutral Supply center.

5. Sicily and Sardinia are passable. There is a Direct Passage between Sicily and Naples for all units.

6. When writing orders, players must specify the letter of the province they are moving to, except for Switzerland. (e.g. Player B: A Piedmont "B"-Venice "C." F Adriatic "C" supports A Piedmont "b"-Venice "C.")

7. Note that some provinces touch two other spaces with the same name, making the use of letters very important. Every Ionian Sea touches 2 Tunises and 2 Tyrrhenian Seas. Every Venice touches 2 Piedmonts; every Piedmont 2 Venices.

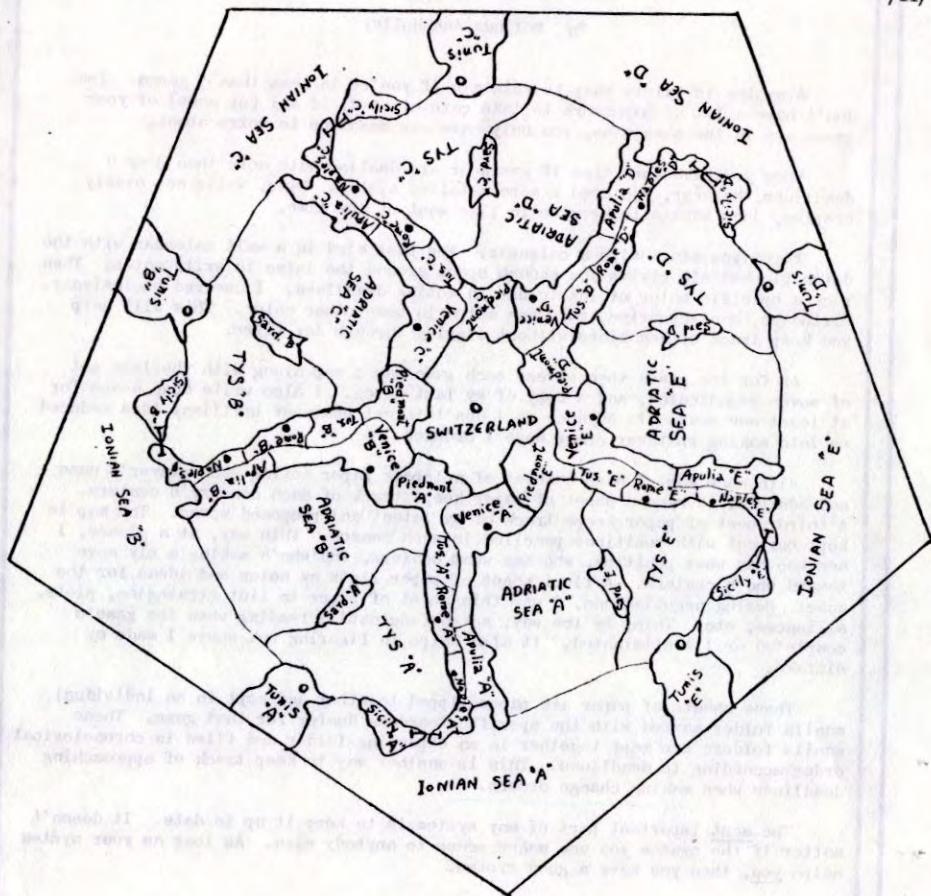
8. Players are strictly forbidden against choosing any one of the Five Italies as their favorite.

9. (Optional): Switzerland is defended by a Garrison. This Garrison must be dislodged before it can be entered. (A garrison is the same as an A in Civil Disorder.)

Additional Comments by Fred Davis, Jr.

I decided to add Sardinia to the map, and to make Sicily passable, just to add a few more move possibilities to the game. There are now 46 land spaces; 21 supply centers, and 25 ordinary ones. This may be slightly too many ordinary ones. I was thinking of adding another set of supply centers in Sardinia to make things more interesting, but decided to leave things as they are for now. If anyone tries adding more supply centers, please let me know the results. I also added the Optional Rule 9.

An interesting thing here is that Italy can try several different openings in the same game!



FIVE ITALIES - The Kathy Byrne Variant

Designed by Mike Lee, 1985.
This Map drawn by Fred C. Davis, 1986

- = Home Supply Center
- = Neutral Supply Center
- = Direct Passage

The letters "A,B,C," etc. identify the various Italies, which are named "Italy A," "Italy B," etc.

THE SYSTEM

by Melinda Ann Holley

A system is fairly easy to maintain if you're in less than 5 games. You don't have a lot of paperwork to take care of; and, if all (or most) of your games are in the same zine, you only have one deadline to worry about.

When you have more than 10 games or are dealing with more than 3 or 4 deadlines, however, you need a more detailed system. Mine, while not overly complex, does manage to keep me in line most of the time.

First you start with a calendar. The best kind is a wall calendar with the dates blocked off giving you enough space around the dates to write notes. Then pick a specific color of ink to use in noting deadlines. I use red exclusively. Birthdays, anniversaries, etc. are noted in some other color. This will help you keep track of deadlines without digging through any files.

As for the games themselves, each game has a map along with the last set of moves adjudicated, and a copy of my last moves. I also write down moves for at least one season in advance so I don't forget whatever brilliant idea seduced me into making whatever crazy move I ordered.

With each map, I have a sheet of notebook paper noting each player's name and address. A second sheet of paper keeps track of each country's centers. A third sheet of paper keeps track of my latest and proposed moves. The map is kept current with positions penciled in each season. This way, at a glance, I see who has what position, who has what centers, and who's making a sly move toward who's centers. A final sheet of paper lists my notes and ideas for the game. During negotiations, I use this sheet of paper to list strategies, plots, alliances, etc. This, by the way, makes fascinating reading when the game's completed or I'm eliminated. It also helps in figuring out where I made my mistake.

These sheets of paper are paperclipped together and kept in an individual manila folder marked with the specific Boardman Number for that game. These manila folders are kept together in an expanding folder and filed in chronological order according to deadlines. This is another way to keep track of approaching deadlines when making change orders.

The most important part of any system is to keep it up to date. It doesn't matter if the system you use makes sense to anybody else. As long as your system helps you, then you have a good system.

MY FIRST TIME

by Steve Langley

It was going to be a long weekend. I had a slight cold. It only affected my ears and throat a little, but that was enough. Hebner had cut me from the trip to the quarter finals.

I wouldn't have minded. I'd only joined the glee club to meet girls anyway. The trouble with joining the glee club to meet girls was that all the girls I knew were away at the quarter finals. It was going to be a long, long weekend. Then Skizzy, the nerd from down the hall, mentioned some sort of games convention. He was even going to be in some sort of tournament for dips. I figured to go along for laughs.

There were hundreds of people there. Most of them guys wearing glasses and looking a lot like Skizzy. What girls I saw looked a lot like the guys. Everyone had stacks of notebooks or games in the backpacks or under the arms. I'd figured Skizzy for a shoo-in in the dip tournament until I caught a sight of his competition. I heard one guy say something that I'm sure was:

"The next time we're hit by pirates we have a surprise for them. We just mounted two mazer beams..." at least, that's what it sounded like. Everyone was talking about their fighters or magic users or space ships. Everyone was talking about their fighters or magic users or space ships. I was ready to leave, long weekend or not.

Then I saw her. What was a girl like that doing in a room full of...dips? But then, I was in a room full of dips. Maybe she'd been facing a long weekend, too. From a distance she was anywhere from an 8 to a 10. As I got closer, I put her at about 8.7.

"Hi." short, but effective in crowds.

"Oh, Hi!" she sounded very happy to see me. Between the voice and the eyes and her obvious good taste, she went up to a 9.7.

"I hate to sound corny, but what's a girl like you..."

"Doing in a nice place like this?" she laughed and I was both in lust and in love.

"Well...uh..." My mind had stopped working. I was afraid to move. I might step on my own tongue.

"My brother dragged me down to play in a Diplomacy tournament."

Her brother. Not boy friend. Brother!

"Would you like to go somewhere and get a coke?"

"Oh, I'd love to, but I just signed up to play in the first round novice game. We need a couple more. Why don't you sign up too? We can be allies."

"Uh, yeah...I don't know how...I mean, where do I sign?"

Fifteen minutes and \$10.00 later I was a registered member of the Diplomacy Tournament and I was in my first Diplomacy game as Turkey. Alice, for that was my dream girl's name, was Russia. Luckily, she knew how to play. I surely didn't. I liked the part where we went off and talked for fifteen minutes. By the time the orders were due, she was holding my arm and snuggling close. She wasn't wearing a bra. I was having trouble with the fit of my pants. I was ready for the game to be over. Once it was over, I definitely had plans for another game we could play.

Alice wrote my moves for me. They were good moves, too. She even told me what to build before the builds were due. She explained that there was no negotiating during the builds, so I would have to write those orders myself. The moves she wrote for me were good. It didn't take me long to figure out that the little colored blocks of wood on the game board were markers for the results of the moves. For a while, it was all snuggle close to Alice and build and capture and build more fleets. Inbetween the moves, we'd go off and stand real close and pretend to discuss the game. I was slowly going crazy.

We took most of Austria and I was almost starting to understand what we were doing when Alice told me to go talk to the nerd playing France. I didn't want to talk to anyone else, but she took a deep breath. So I adjusted my pants again and talked to France. I told him what she told me to tell him and turned in the moves she told me to turn in, and pretty soon, Italy was starting to look like Austria and Alice and I were looking like sure winners.

We'd been at it for hours (it only seemed like days) and I was about ready to grab her and throw her down on the gameboard. Between us we had more than half of the dots. Alice had a few more than me. Russia has to be bigger, she said, that's why it starts out bigger. England and France had about as many dots as I had, and everyone else was out of the game. Both England and France were pushing for a four way draw. That sounded really good to me, too. That way Alice and I could split this scene and get down to some serious negotiating.

Alice told me to talk to France while she talked to England. She said they had us in a stalemate. I thought that was a chess term, but what the heck? So I told France what Alice told me to tell him, that we would agree to the draw after one more season. I spent the rest of the time glaring at England because Alice had reached out and put her hand on his arm. I know, I know...I told you it was half lust.

The moves were read. England vetoed the draw, and suddenly, Alice had four of my dots. It took a few seconds for that to hit me. I was more upset over England's veto than losing the dots. Without any negotiation, it was kind of difficult to figure out what to do. Alice tried to explain it to me, but France raised a big stink. Finally, one of the people running the tournament came over and told me what Alice had been telling me, I had to remove four units. I was still pretty pissed at England, so I told off the four that were the farthest away from his units.

Alice took me off and stood real close and I felt lots better. She explained that the game could go on for ever with England vetoing the draw, and so she had just had to take my dots in order to end it. She knew I was as eager as she was for it to end (she had that right). By the time she finished talking, it all made delicious sense. I wrote down the moves she told me to.

France had been talking to England and then both of them descended upon us. They were both talking at the same time about stabbing and how if we worked together, we could stop Alice and get the four way. Alice took another deep breath around my arm and licked her lower lip. Those guys had to be kidding.

The game ended in a solo 19 center win for Russia. We all had to sign the record sheet. Both France and England glowered at me, but I just smiled.

"Now, let's get out of here!"

"Oh, Sweetie, I can't go now."

"What...why....but?"

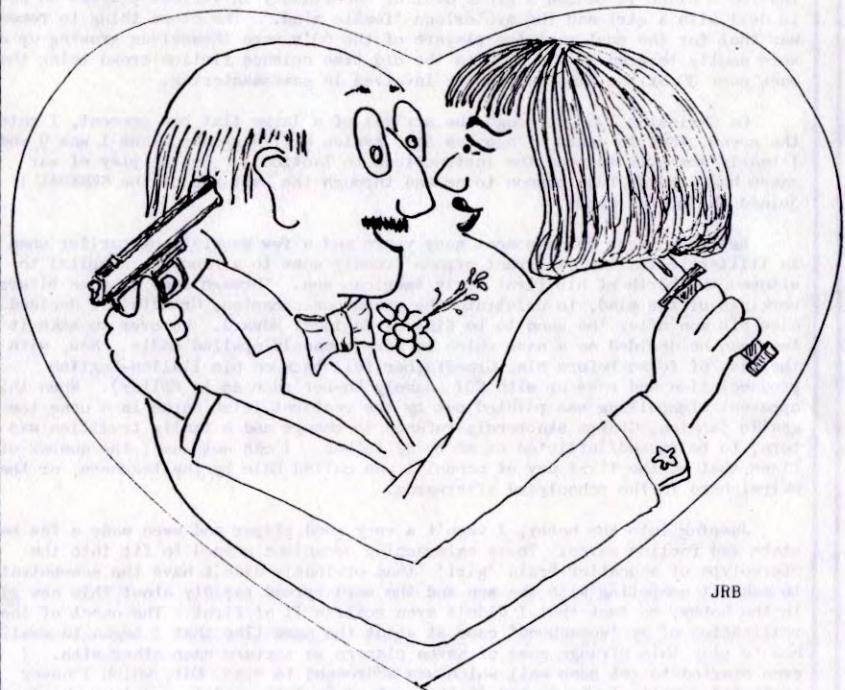
"I have to sign up for the next round and then go find myself another ally."

"But!?"

"I'd love it to be you, but we can't play in another game together.
Tournament rules."

"But!?!?"

"Thanks for the game, it was fun being your ally." And she walked away.
The walk would have made her a 10 if I'd been walking with her. It was really
going to be a long, long, long weekend.



JRB

A WOMAN BEFORE HER TIME

by Edi Birsan

Growing up is admittedly a bad enough problem for most of us, however, when one tries to do so in the midst of the 1960's Diplomacy hobby things can get a bit complicated. The real world necessity of stopping an unwinnable war was contrasted sharply with the hobby world imperative to win numerous 'Little Wars'. If that wasn't enough of a major undercurrent of confusion in the 60's postal hobby letter columns and debate, there was the smashing impact on the American society of the Sexual Revolution and the growing realization of women existing beyond the traditional roles portrayed in the mass media and Grandma's harried looks at the youngsters of the day. The player's of the 60's were 98% male and totally unprepared for anykind of competition with a 'girl' for it was unheard of to have 'girls' compete against men (never boys) in anything, and a women in a wargame was strictly a fantasy from the Twilight Zone and obviously not a serious opponent. This isolation from competition is an important background feature of the '60's since it caused a great deal of uncertainty in various players on how to deal with a girl and the mysterious 'female mind.' The other thing to remember was that for the most part the players of the 60's were themselves growing up and were mostly between 17 and 27 with the old time science fiction crowd being the ones over 30 at the time and mostly involved in gamesmastering.

On Christmas 1965, through the arrival of a large flat box present, I entered the scene, then 16 years of age, an avid Avalon Hill wargamer since I was 9 when I blearily was able to read the instructions to Tactics I. Postal play of war games had already been common to me and through the want ads of the GENERAL I joined the postal hobby.

Let us digress for a moment many years and a few generations earlier when an illiterate Italian immigrant orphan proudly came to a Brooklyn hospital to witness the birth of his first truly American son. Through some unknown bizarre workings of the mind, to celebrate the momentous occasion, Grandfather decided to name his son after the soon to be King of England: Edward. However to make it American he decided on a name which is more commonly spelled Eddie. Now, with the mass of forms before him, Grandfather fell back on his Italian-English pronunciation and came up with EDI (namely Eh-Dee such as in EDITor). When this apparent misspelling was pointed out by the resident Irish nurse in a none too gentle fashion, Gramps stubbornly refused to change and a family tradition was born, to be passed/inflicted on me by my father. I can not count the number of times that on the first day of school I was called Edie by the teachers, or the skirmishers in the schoolyard afterwards.

Jumping into the hobby, I wasn't a very good player and even made a few bad stabs and foolish moves. These embarrassing occasions seemed to fit into the stereotype of a scatter-brain 'girl' that obviously didn't have the concentration to make it competing with the men and the word spread rapidly about this new girl in the hobby, so fast that I didn't even realize it at first. The onset of the realization of my 'womanhood' came at about the same time that I began to realize how to play this strange game of seven players we torture each other with. I even started to get some mail which was addressed to Miss. Edi, which I never corrected...hell, I was so bad in the early days I figured I needed any kind of help I could get. Soon enough some of the 'old timers' of the sixties met me

and we all hit it off pretty well and an early conspiracy was hatched by Jeff Key and John Koning, some of my favorite people. I was always described as Mary Ann Key's friend; Edi, in the write ups on little hobby outings (Remember that DIPCON II had only 10 people). In those days when a man wrote about another man's wife's friend she was always a female friend, so the image spread through the masses.

In those early years, when I had the female image at its height, I encountered the absolute stupidity, under-estimation, self-deceiving confidence---even conceit ---that manifested itself in those of my opponents that were attracted to my female image. It became easy to manipulate them, get away with the most outrageous acts of the game and when my tactical know how came on board, those ill disguised Romeos and what would be called male chauvinists were dead ducks. Some of the classic letter exchanges I would receive after stabbing one of the boys afflicted with petticoat blindness stand out as the monuments to the idiocy that is called 'men.' I once explained to one Austrian that the reason I went to Trieste was that I was doing my nails at the time and being distracted I thought it was the same as Tyrolia. Not only did he believe it, all he was concerned about was do I color coordinate my lipstick and did I enjoy Broadway plays, he had never seen one, and Spring break was coming up, etc. etc.... Men stink.

I never could bring myself to come on to a guy in a game. For the most part it is poor strategy and even I had some limits, not only that, it wasn't fun. However a few set rules I established for myself, first I never made the first approach on the subject of a female image. I would play the game 'straight' without resorting to 'sexual politics,' and in fact about 70% of the games were boringly that way. Someone who touched on the subject would never be corrected, at least not initially, and the subject would be ignored unless he decided to press the issue. However, when a fellow player started heavy on the image he was fair game. Playing hard to get, a little sarcastic, critical of the 'lack of style' in today's world worked like a charm, especially when it was combined with the stereotyped images these people maintained of women. Furthermore, the pagan dogs that would come on to you deserved no mercy. Most of all of this was carried out with normal letters. An occasional phone call was handled by my 'brother.' And in one celebrated case, the use of a picture 'with a friend' was used to complete the set up of a particularly persistent and pushy player.

I can only remind players, that Diplomacy is essentially a game with only seven pieces: the players themselves. If you as a player force into the game a need for a relationship that distracts you from the board while at the same time blinding you from the game motives of an opponent, then you open yourself up to gross manipulation. When that need is expressed harmlessly and within a positive light generally you get redirected back to the purpose of the game, to have some fun and try to win. However, when you come on hard to a woman and shout through your ignorance the prejudice of your hormonal imbalance, then you are begging to be led down the garden path of deception and dumped into the dung heap of fools.

This is but a small glimpse of one aspect of the world of the women in the hobby as it was almost twenty years ago. The current expansion of the hobby with large numbers of players that do not have the experience of growing up in a male isolated life pattern, as well as the more open views of stereotypes and traditions, may preclude some of the insulting silliness that I had seen in the hobby. Possibly the 'men' of the 80's hobby are different, since the background of society has changed, but possibly it has not changed enough.

THERE YOU HAVE IT

Something old (...), something new (...), and something blue (...).

We hope you enjoyed our special issue. More importantly we hope it gave you something to think about. Women have come a long way in the Diplomacy hobby in the last twenty-five years, but they still have a long way to go. The St. Valentine's Day Massacre is an annual hobby tradition. Did you host or attend one this year? If you did, send us a report for the next DW. If not, why not?

If the response to this issue is favorable, we plan to do more such issues in the future, featuring other significant sub-groups (dare I say sub-cultures?) in the hobby. To steal a line, WE ARE THE DIPLOMACY WORLD. But such issues require input from the DW family. The DW staff, no matter how talented or how dedicated, can't write all the articles for DW. You have to help. Here's how.

Kathy is worried about the lack of articles on file for DW. I'm not. I know that there are lots more articles out there just waiting to be written. So, that's what I'm asking you to do. That's right, we want you to write an article for DW. If you enjoyed this issue that's how you can thank us (a check would also be nice, but right now I would prefer an article), by writing an article for DW. It doesn't have to be long (600-1000 words is fine). It doesn't have to be profound (OK, so you know you have a new Lepanto Opening up your sleeve, share it with us.). It doesn't even have to be perfect. Few articles sent to DW are. At first. We'll work with you. If it is typed, we'd appreciate it. But if it isn't, we'll struggle with it. I'm going to have to get bifocals one of these days anyway. The important thing is that you write something for DW. It can be a letter, even a question (or an answer), an article, or a feature. Whether you are a novice or a hobby old timer; if you have the brains and interest to play Diplomacy; you've probably got the talent to write for DW. At least we think so.

So, here's my pitch. I want you, all of you, to write an article of some sort for DW. It can be about any aspect of the game, or hobby, and written at any level. It can be serious or humorous. Even if you've written for DW in the past or you've never written for DW I want you to write again. If nothing else write us and tell us what you thought of the last issue and this issue. That's got to be worth a page. And I want all of you to do it. That's right, all of you. Each and every one of you. I want to bury Kathy under a pile of DW articles. Hundreds of them!! And if each of you do what I ask it will happen. Then Kathy will stop bugging me about how we need articles. And then I can go back to work on my project.

Writing for DW isn't supposed to be difficult. It is supposed to be fun. And that's the approach we want you to take. Have fun writing about Diplomacy for DW.

Oh yes, there is one more thing. When Kathy is done with the articles she's going to ship them off to me (Aren't you Kathy?) and I'm going to sift through them and send the best ones off to the judges in the XENOCOGIC/XXTH ANNIVERSARY ESSAY CONTEST. So maybe, just maybe, your article might be worth a prize in that contest. And there are some very nice prizes: money, games, publications, etc. So you have a two barrel shotgun here if you want to use it. First, an article for DW and second an article for the XENOCOGIC contest. Either way you win and the hobby benefits. Isn't that what it's all about?

Besides, best of all, if you all write an article for DW now you won't have to listen to me beg and plea for articles for a while and Kathy will stop bugging you and we'll all live happily ever after.

So, now, 500 words on the importance of the neutrality of Switzerland in Diplomacy...

...AS THE
DIPLOMACY
WORLD
TURNS

...SO ARE
THE LADYS
OF OUR
LIVES
#41.5

